

MARYLAND ENGINEER RECEIVES SILVER STAR POSTHUMOUSLY

Sgt. Michael J. McMullen was already providing aid to his wounded fellow soldier when the second improvised explosive device (IED) detonated. With his back to the blast, McMullen shielded his comrade from deadly shrapnel and most likely saved his buddy's life. This action along with his actions in the 10 minutes preceding it would see McMullen awarded the Silver Star and would ultimately cost him his life.

On Dec. 24, 2005, a convoy led by members of the Maryland Army National Guard's 243rd Engineer Co., from Baltimore, was returning to its Forward Operating Base after a re-supply mission in Western Iraq. McMullen, a professional firefighter/paramedic in his hometown of Salisbury, Md., had volunteered to serve as the convoy's aid-man. For the return trip he'd share a vehicle with Sgt. 1st Class James D. Bartholomew, the convoy commander and fellow member of the 243rd.

Shortly after the convoy's last vehicle exited camp an explosion was heard and word came over the radio that the convoy sustained an IED strike.

McMullen and Bartholomew immediately pulled their M915 truck out of the convoy and raced past 13 vehicles to the site of the IED attack. The blast had ruptured the fuel tank on an M915 and the vehicle was engulfed in flames.

Continued on page 3

Silver Star



The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Army, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. •

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor



Michael S. Steele
Lt. Governor



Sgt. Michael J. McMullen

In This Issue...

- ★ Governor Proposes MDFF Legislation (page 2)
- ★ Maryland CPAs Aid Guard Members (page 3)
- ★ New Armory in St. Mary's County (page 4)
- ★ Chinooks Drop Into Md. (page 7)
- ★ Get Ready For Severe Weather (page 8)



Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

Michael S. Steele
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Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill
Adjutant General

TO THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE MARYLAND MILITARY DEPARTMENT:

I recently returned from Qatar where I had the opportunity to visit our Citizen-airmen and by the time this is published, I will have visited our Citizen-soldiers in Iraq. The dignity and quiet professionalism displayed by the members of the Maryland Guard serving in the Middle East reflects the patriotism, selflessness, gallantry and valor of our forefathers. The common thread in each person that I spoke with was a pride and enthusiasm for serving their nation and the state. Even more remarkable are the sacrifices being made and the unshakable support of the family members and employers of our deployed men and women.

Most of you have learned about the passing of Staff Sgt. Michael McMullen of the 243rd Engineer Company of the Maryland Army National Guard, which is currently serving in Iraq. Michael's life embodied the spirit of the Citizen-soldier evidenced by his devotion to serve others in civilian life as well as a full-time Firefighter Paramedic in Salisbury, Md. He answered the call to serve his nation and his fellow Soldiers when he volunteered to be on the aid and litter team for a convoy mission on Christmas Eve, 2005. His convoy was attacked with an improvised explosive device (IED) and Michael rushed to the aid of an injured Soldier. Michael was able to remove an injured Soldier from the danger of small arms fire and pulled him to safety. He was providing first aid when he was severely wounded by a second IED attack. Credited for saving the wounded Soldier, Michael died from his injuries on January 10, 2006 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He was interred with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. During his eulogy I think our Chaplain (Col.) Sean Lee captured the essence of this dedicated Soldier when he said that, "Michael died so that another might live." For his heroic selfless actions in saving the life of the wounded Soldier at the cost of his own, Staff Sgt. McMullen posthumously received the Silver Star. We have had others wounded in action and I am happy to report all are doing well in recovery. Please keep the McMullen family and all members of the Maryland Military Department in your prayers.

Integrity, valor, sacrifice, and a determination to get the job done, are the common bonds that demonstrate the core values of the men and women of the Maryland National Guard. Defending the liberty of our fellow citizens could not be in better hands. From Operation Iraqi Freedom to the upcoming hurricane season, we are fully engaged!

Respectfully,

Bruce F. Tuxill
Major General, MDANG
The Adjutant General

Fifth Regiment Armory Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Governor Proposes MDDF Employment Protection Legislation

Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. proposed a bill as part of his 2006 legislative package which if enacted would provide employment protection for members of the Maryland Defense Force (MDDF). Members of MDDF, who are volunteers, may be called into State Active Service by the Governor in response to a natural or man-made disaster. There currently is no such employment

protection for members of the MDDF.

The aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita saw the first ever deployment of MDDF personnel outside of the State of Maryland. Medical teams from the MDDF organized and operated six medical clinics in Jefferson Parish, La. Before their tour of duty ended, the teams saw and treated almost 7,000 patients. The teams consisted

of physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other health care professionals and provided first-rate care to the victims of the disaster. The Maryland Military Department strongly supports House Bill 292, which would provide for the protection of members employment until after the MDDF members return from active state service. •

Maryland Military Department

Maryland Engineer

Continued from page 1

Sgt. Randal L. Divil, a 243rd member, had been in the passenger seat and made his way out of the burning vehicle however his uniform had caught fire covering him in flames. By this time the convoy began taking small arms fire from both sides of the road. McMullen pulled Divil to safety in front of the truck then rolled him on the ground extinguishing the flames. McMullen then assessed the wounded soldier's injuries and had Bartholomew prep an IV bag.

At this point the second IED detonated.

On Jan. 10, 2006, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., while surrounded by family members, Sgt. Michael J. McMullen, 25, died as a result of the wounds he sustained on Dec. 24.

"We often use the word hero to describe personal acts that go above and beyond the call of duty," said Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, adjutant general for Maryland. "By all accounts, Sgt. McMullen lived up to that definition, giving his life while caring for and protecting his fellow Soldiers."

McMullen had begun volunteering at the Salisbury Fire Department, located on

Maryland's Eastern Shore, in December 2001. Two years later he was serving as a professional paramedic and deployed with the 243rd in June 2005.

"He was well respected," said Salisbury Fire Chief David See. "He was a gung-ho guy and was right there beside you, and he'll be missed."

On Jan. 17 members of the 243rd held a memorial service for McMullen in Kuwait.

"Today we are here to pay our respects, to say farewell and to honor a rambunctious brother, a beautiful and caring son, a dedicated Soldier," said Chaplain (Capt.) Rodney Thomas. "Sgt. Michael McMullen was all these and more."

In addition to the Silver Star, McMullen was posthumously promoted to Staff Sergeant. He was interred with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on Jan. 20. He is survived by his mother, father and two siblings. •



Members of the 243rd Engineer Co. pay their respects to Sgt. Michael McMullen during a memorial service held on Jan. 17 in Kuwait. Photo courtesy of CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

Serving Those Who Serve

The following article appeared in the March/April 2006 edition of "The Statement," a member publication of the Maryland Association of CPAs. It is reprinted here with permission. By Bill Sheridan, "Statement" Editor.

They have volunteered to leave behind their civilian lives—jobs, family, creature comforts—to serve their country.

But when National Guard members need help, who serves them?

A great many people, it turns out, and among them now are Certified Public Accountants (CPAs).

Maryland Association of CPAs (MACPA) members were among those on hand Dec. 10 to answer Guard members' questions during a "Soldier Readiness Processing," or SRP, event at Camp Fretterd in Reisterstown, Md.

SRPs prepare Guard members for deployment by ensuring that legal, financial, spiritual, medical and civilian employment issues have been addressed before deploying. In Camp Fretterd's case, dozens of Maryland Guard Soldiers

received such preparation prior to leaving for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where they will provide security and administration support for the detention facilities there.

MACPA Executive Director Tom Hood and members Jeanne Strickler and James Crites were on hand to offer Guard members advice and information about the tax, financial planning and retirement issues that are unique to military personnel.

"I really feel it's important that CPAs give something back to those who need it," said Strickler, a CPA at Goucher College. "This is an important group doing such important work, and we're just trying to help them out."

The event is just one example of how MACPA members are providing financial resources to Maryland National Guard members and their families. Other efforts include speaking engagements, individual counseling, e-mail question-and-answer sessions and the like. To date, 16 members have signed up as volunteers for this initiative.

"I believe it is our duty to do anything possible to support our troops, whether or not we believe in the necessity of the event

or the politics involved in this national venture. They are our best people, and our future," said Crites, of JL Crites & Associates, LLC. "My own experience was in Vietnam. When we returned from combat... acceptance by our populace was simply not there. I sincerely hope we as a nation learned our lessons and never again spurn the men and women who put their lives on the line for our freedom."

Continued on page 5



Jeanne Strickler, CPA, assists a Soldier during the December SRP.

New Armory Greets MI Platoon



Military and local officials cut the ceremonial ribbon to the new Patuxent River Readiness Center. Photo by Staff Sgt. William Fearington

Recently, members of the Maryland Army National Guard were welcomed home by federal, state and local officials at a newly constructed armory. The inauguration ceremony and ribbon cutting took place at the Maryland National Guard armory in St. Mary's County, Md. on Feb. 5.

Approximately 20 Citizen-soldiers of the 629th Military Intelligence Battalion's Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (TUAV) Platoon were welcomed home after serving on active duty for more than two years, longer than any other Maryland National Guard unit since World War II. Twelve of those months were spent in Iraq supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"This unit has distinguished itself in a long and difficult mission," said Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. prior to the platoon's welcome home ceremony. "Their continuing dedication, training and experience contribute to defense of the homeland. They are a shining example of public service at its best and we are proud to welcome them home."

Equipped with the Shadow 200 tactical unmanned aerial vehicle—the platoon possesses the very cutting edge of Army transformational technology. The Maryland unit was the first reserve component unit to receive this technology and unit members also were the first to follow the U.S. Army model of being mobilized, equipped, trained and deployed in succession.

The construction of their new home, the Patuxent River Readiness Center,

marks a return to its roots for the Maryland National Guard. The Saint Marie's City Militia, one of the forerunners to today's National Guard, was established in 1634. February's ribbon cutting brings the militia forces of Maryland full circle, with the return of the National Guard to St. Mary's County.

The Patuxent River Readiness Center is the result of a joint Maryland National Guard/ U.S. Navy effort using a "design build" approach, which sets the scope, price and timetable for the project while allowing bidding companies to be creative in meeting the government's needs in a way that is both cost effective and efficient. Naval Facilities Engineering Command Washington contracted the Maryland-based Barclay White/Coakley Construction joint venture to build the 31,000 square foot facility. The \$6.6 million project was completed on time and under budget.

In addition to the TUAV Platoon, the facility also will house Company A of the 129th Signal Battalion later this year. •

Sgt. Steven Feeney, TUAV Platoon member, is formally welcomed home by Lt. Governor Michael Steele.
Photo by Staff Sgt. William Fearington



Governor Promotes Walsh to Brigadier General

Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., recently announced the federal recognition of the promotion of Col. Guy M. Walsh to the rank of brigadier general in the U.S. Air Force with assignment as commander of the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Wing.

"The State of Maryland, and particu-

larly the Maryland Air National Guard, is extremely fortunate to have a general officer such as General Walsh lead the fine men and women of the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Wing," said Governor Ehrlich during the announcement on Feb. 3. "This announcement represents a great milestone in the Maryland National

Guard, as well as the great achievement of one of our nation's military officers."

As commander of the 175th Wing, Walsh is responsible for more than 1,500 military and civilian personnel spanning the areas of aircraft maintenance and operations, security forces, medical, civil engineering and mission support.

"General Walsh is an extremely talented and accomplished officer who in a brief period of time, has taken the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Wing to the next level," said Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, adjutant general for Maryland. "One of General Walsh's greatest strengths is his deep understanding of the fact that it's the people, and not the hardware, that make the difference. To that end, I am extremely confident that the men and women—the professionals of the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Wing—are in superb hands."

A graduate of the U.S. Air Force's Air Command and Staff College, the Army Command and General Staff College and the Air War College, Walsh joined the Maryland Air National Guard in 2002 after serving 20 years on active duty in the U.S. Air Force.

Since assuming command more than three years ago, 175th Wing personnel and aircraft have deployed worldwide in support of the Global War on Terror as well as humanitarian missions in Eastern Europe, Pakistan and the Gulf Coast region following hurricanes, Katrina and Rita. •



Brig. Gen. Guy M. Walsh is pinned by Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. during his promotion ceremony. Photo courtesy of Governor's Office

Serving Those Who Serve

Continued from page 3

The MACPA's participation in the Camp Fretterd SRP grew out of two events—the launch of the association's financial literacy campaign, which aims to increase the financial I.Q. of all Marylanders; and Sen. Barbara Mikulski's recent call for a concentrated effort to provide financial information to military personnel and their families.

"At the same time, we were putting together a finance operation of our own," said Lt. Col. (Md.) Hugh Robinson of the

Maryland Defense Force. "As a result, three groups—the Maryland National Guard, the Maryland Defense Force and the MACPA—got together to coordinate financial programs for Soldiers."

The Maryland Defense Force is one of four "pillars" of the Maryland Military Department; the others are the Maryland Army National Guard, the Maryland Air National Guard and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency.

"We are so grateful to the MACPA,

because it gives us essentially a 'force multiplier' for financial information," said Robinson, whose civilian title is senior vice president at Bay National Bank. "We can refer Soldiers to members of the MACPA, who have the ability to answer a quick question, solve a very quick problem or, if need be, get more in depth with the Soldier to provide some assistance."

Maryland National Guard members seeking financial advice can e-mail the MDDF at: finance@mddf.us •

There Is History Here!

By 2nd Lt. Wayde Minami, JFHQ Historian

“I had no idea this was here!” It’s a statement we hear all the time here at the Maryland Center for Military History.

The center, located at the Fifth Regiment Armory in Baltimore, is operated by the Joint Forces Headquarters Historical Services Office and includes the Maryland Museum of Military History and the Maryland Military Historical Research Center.

Located in the former 175th Infantry regimental headquarters, the Maryland Museum of Military History was founded in 1982 as the Maryland National Guard Museum. The museum was the culmination of years of effort by a group of dedicated officers, who subsequently formed the Maryland National Guard Historical Society to oversee museum operations.

The museum facilities at the Fifth Regiment Armory are named in honor of Brig. Gen. (Md.) Bernard Feingold, the Maryland National Guard Museum’s original director, and contain displays of military artifacts and memorabilia dating back to the founding of the Maryland colony in the 17th century.

The museum includes an extensive collection of Civil War and World War II artifacts. Recently, added was a state-of-the-art realistic mannequin of a World War II 29th Division Soldier.

The museum is currently presenting a special exhibit of Maryland National Guard cartoons produced by Baltimore Sun artist Richard “Moco” Yardley. Spanning the 1930s, 40s, 50s, and 60s, these drawings poke fun at well-known Maryland National Guard personalities as they document the military life—chiggers, crab-cakes and all.

But the museum is only half the story. The Maryland Center for Military History also includes a historical research center.

The research center contains an extensive collection of documents, photographs, audio recordings and motion pictures relating to Maryland’s military history, including one of the world’s most extensive collections of World War II documents relating to the 29th Infantry Division.

It is also home to the Hancock Memorial Library, whose reading room is open to members of the Military Department.

Both the museum and the research center are open to the public as well as researchers. Staff historians are available to help locate specific documents or other information.

To ensure staff members are available to assist with research inquiries, visitors are advised to call in advance and make an appointment.



WWII 29th Division mannequin in the Maryland Museum of Military History. Photo by Staff Sgt. William Fearington

The Maryland Center for Military History is located on the first floor of the Fifth Regiment Armory. For more information, call 410-576-1496. •

Help Keep History Alive

By Maryland Center for Military History

They’re colorful, they’re historic, and boy would one look good in the rec room. But before you even think about taking that old guidon home—or offering it to a retiring commander—you should be aware of the risk you’re taking.

Under Title 10, Section 4565 of the U.S. Code, title to organizational colors, standards, and guidons remains with the United States. That means that flags and guidons cannot, under any circum-

stances, be taken or given as gifts—even if they would otherwise have been destroyed. Unauthorized possession, sale, or transfer of a unit flag constitutes theft and is a federal offense.

But even more importantly, it represents the loss of a unit’s heritage and history. Today, you can visit the Fifth Regiment Armory and see the regimental colors Maryland’s 175th Infantry carried ashore at Omaha Beach in 1944.

It’s a priceless piece of history. But it could just as easily ended up in someone’s basement.

The same holds true today: the guidon your company carried in Iraq belongs in a museum, not your rec room.

New Helo for MD Army Guard

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. William Fearington,
MDNG Public Affairs

Units within the Maryland Army National Guard (MDARNG) are benefiting from the U.S. Army transformation. The increase in jobs, equipment and training created by the Army's modernization plan means more opportunities for current MDARNG Soldiers and new recruits. One unit is already reaping the rewards of the makeover having recently received new aircraft.

"With the Chinook, we can support vital missions such as Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom," said Capt. William Hummer, commander of Company B, 3-126th General Aviation Battalion and Chinook pilot. "We are also capable of providing natural disaster aid and a wide range of capabilities like sling loading, air assault training, transporting cargo, troops and equipment."

The aviation unit received the first Chinook in August 2005 and has since received another. Ultimately the unit will have a total of four of the aircraft.

Company B will be able to support various state missions as well as the Global War on Terrorism with the addition of the CH-47D Chinook helicopter. The aircraft is the first of its kind to be used in the Maryland Army National Guard. Pilots and crew chiefs have already logged more than 120



A new Maryland Army National Guard CH-47D Chinook is prepped for flight.

hours of flight time in the Chinook, becoming more familiar with the aircraft with every hour of flight. The Chinooks will be used to support operations dictated by the governor and the Maryland National Guard.

Soldiers also are rapidly learning how to maintain the new aircraft.

"I like to tell people that I am a flight engineer," said Staff Sgt. Darren Eggerman. He maintains the aircraft and ensures that it is mechanically and operationally safe before flight. "I love my job because the aircraft can't fly anywhere without me," he added.

According to Hummer his unit has openings for pilots, flight engineers and crew chiefs. "I think that this aircraft will be a great recruiting tool," said Hummer. •



Staff Sgt. Darren Eggerman, a flight engineer with Co. B, 3-126th Aviation performs maintenance on a CH-47D Chinook helicopter.

MDMILDEP Hosts African American Patriots Day Celebration

The Maryland Military Department played host to the 19th Annual African-American Patriots Day on Saturday, Feb. 25 at the Lt. Col. Melvin H. Cade Armory in Baltimore. Representatives from various veteran organizations as well as members of the Maryland Army and Air National Guard attended. The driving force of this event was Delegate Clarence Davis of Maryland's 45th District (Baltimore). The celebration was marked by tributes to Clarence M. Bacon, Marian C. James, Melvin G. Smullen, and Leroy E. Thornton. These individuals received several citations from Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. and Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley for their services to Maryland veterans. Delegate Davis read the names of fallen members of the Armed Forces from Maryland including members of the Maryland National Guard.

A color guard from the Maryland National Guard Honor Guard presented the Colors at the beginning of the event and an Honor Guard bugler played "Taps" to honor the fallen Marylanders. Students of the Free State Challenge Program also attended the celebration. Representing the department were Brig. Gen. Edward Ballard and Brig. Gen. Alberto Jimenez.

At the conclusion of the ceremony Delegate Davis and other officials laid a wreath at the Battle Monument in Baltimore City. •

Prepare for Severe Weather Season

Spring is the beginning of Severe Weather Season for the Mid-Atlantic States with the threat of weather events such as thunderstorms, floods and tornadoes. Now is the time to prepare for these events, which can occur at any time.

Thunderstorms & Lightning

Here's what you can do to protect yourself:

Before a storm

- >Be aware of weather forecasts.
- >Invest in a NOAA weather radio to receive severe weather alerts.
- >Watch for signs of approaching storms.
- >Keep a commercial battery-operated radio handy.
- >Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are likely.

During a storm

- >REMEMBER: IF YOU CAN HEAR THUNDER, YOU ARE CLOSE ENOUGH TO BE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING. Find shelter!
- >Get into a building or hardtop car. NEVER take shelter in small sheds or under trees.
- >Get out of boats and away from water.
- >Unplug appliances, avoid using the telephone.
- >Do not bathe or shower.
- >Get to higher ground if flash flooding is likely to occur.
- >If outdoors and shelter is not nearby...

- Find a low spot away from trees, fences and poles.
- Squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them. Make yourself the smallest target possible, and minimize your contact with the ground.



Photo courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Floods

ANY area can flood, even high ground.

Before a flood

- >Make sure your property insurance policy covers flooding. Even renters are eligible for flood insurance. Make sure the policy covers both structure and contents.
- >Move valuables to higher floors as floodwaters rise.
- >Keep the car gas tank filled in case you need to evacuate.

- >Prepare a disaster supply kit so that you can survive if you have to leave.
- >Stay informed about weather conditions. Flash flooding can occur in minutes!

After a flood

- >Do not eat or drink anything that has come into contact with floodwater. Follow emergency officials' instructions on safe water consumption. You may have to boil your water.
- >Clean and have electrical equipment checked before using.
- >Report broken utilities to the proper authorities.
- >NEVER play around high water, storm drains, downed utility lines, etc.
- >Use flashlights, not candles. Candles are a fire hazard and could cause an explosion if exposed to flammable gases.
- >Flooding often forces wild animals to seek higher ground. Avoid killing these animals, as rodents will be attracted to the carcasses.

- >Do not drive through flooded roadways. The road may not be there.

- >Follow emergency officials' instructions. If told to evacuate, do so!

>**REMEMBER: Floodwaters sometimes take days to rise after stormy weather has passed. It can take days for floodwaters to move downstream. Don't underestimate the power and speed of floodwaters.**

Tornadoes

It is very important to be familiar with the terms involved:

- >A *Tornado Watch* means that conditions are favorable for a tornado to occur. Continue to watch television or listen to the radio for updates.

- >A *Tornado Warning* means a tornado has been spotted or detected on weather radar and could be coming your way.

Here's what to do if you see a tornado or are under a tornado warning:

- >Get indoors.
- >Go to a basement or interior room or hallway without windows (for protection from flying glass).
- >If you can't get inside, lie flat in a ditch or low area.

Follow instructions given by emergency officials when a tornado threatens or strikes.

For more information, visit www.mema.state.md.us

The End of an Odyssey

By 1st Sgt. D. R. Connolly, First Sergeant, Company B, 1-115th Inf.

In more ways than one, it seemed like the journey would never end. In order to travel 125 miles, the two Soldiers would travel many times that distance—first to Kuwait, then on to Baghdad. Arriving at Baghdad International Airport, they then negotiated a maze of base camps and support areas to find their destination in Camp Liberty, Iraq.

However for these two members of Company B, 1st Bn., 115th Inf. Maryland Army National Guard, it was a small step in a much larger journey. For Spc. Amara Sackor and Private 1st Class Sergio Cruz, it was the final leg of a mission begun many years ago when they immigrated to the United States.

Sackor, born in Liberia and Cruz, born in Peru, traveled to Camp Liberty for final citizenship interviews and a naturalization ceremony on Dec. 17, 2005. 1st Sgt. Don Connolly, Staff Sgt. Murray Fiske and Sgt.

Mike Thompson, also of Company B, accompanied them on their trip.

Sackor and Cruz were eligible to apply for citizenship under special provisions provided for in the Immigration and

for military personnel serving in active duty status, according to their official website at USCIS.gov.

Attending the ceremony at Camp Liberty were the 3rd Infantry Division Commanding General, Maj. Gen. William Webster and the Assistant Division Commander, Brig. Gen. Mark O'Neill.

Excitement, anticipation and pride were in the air as a large crowd gathered in the 3rd Infantry Division Chapel to watch the ceremony. After remarks by O'Neill and a video welcome by President Bush, the candidates recited the Oath of Allegiance. Cruz was selected to lead the new citizens in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

One other Maryland Soldier, Spc. Andre Hendricks, completed his citizenship

process while Company B was still at Fort Stewart, Ga. Eleven other Soldiers in the company have pending applications. •



Maj. Gen. William Webster and Brig. Gen. Mark O'Neill congratulate Spc. Amara Sackor and Private 1st Class Sergio Cruz after their naturalization ceremony (Left to right: Webster, Sackor, Cruz and O'Neill). Photo courtesy of Co. B, 1-115th Inf.

Nationality Act. In addition the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has created a streamlined process specifically

Cuba Deployment



More than 230 Maryland Army Guard Soldiers have deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The group, composed of units from throughout the state, will be part of Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO) and support detainee operations at the naval base.

Brig. Gen. Edward A. Leacock, assistant adjutant general for army, deployed with the composite unit and will be serving as the JTF Deputy Com-

mander for Operations. This is the first time a Maryland Guard General Officer has deployed in support of the Global War on Terror.

The Soldiers were mobilized in January 2006 and sent to Ft. Lewis, Wash. where they were in-processed into the active duty Army.

The Marylanders began arriving in Cuba during February and are expected to be in Cuba for one year. •

Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

Maryland Air Guardsman Brings Water to Base in Iraq

*Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. Jessica D'Aurizio,
407th Air Expeditionary Squadron Public Affairs*

There were five vehicles in the convoy: two gun trucks, one in the lead and one in the rear, a couple of hummers and a fueling truck. The mission, refuel and maintain water pumps at the Euphrates River that supply water to Ali Base, Iraq.

"Even though this is a small part of our mission, it is probably the most important part," said Chief Master Sgt. Mike Bosse, member of the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Civil Engineer Squadron and non-commissioned officer in charge of the Department of Public Works at Ali Base. According to Bosse the base consumes an average of 400,000 gallons per

day. He's been working alongside the Army to keep the base supplied with the water.

As we were trucking down the dirt roads there were goat and sheep herders tending their flocks, and children playing on the desolate landscape.

"You'll see the land start to turn green as we get closer to the river," said Bosse.

It was true. A mile or so before reaching the Euphrates, there were irrigation systems where farmers were once again working the land for food.

Bosse informed me that this area was once a very prosperous area before Saddam Hussein rerouted the river and dried up the wetland to create a military

installation in the area, which is now known as Ali Base.

Approaching the river, the pumps could not be missed; there were locals busy tending them. It seemed like a family affair, children were playing everywhere. What looked like the leaders of the community were standing around talking, as a few performed small duties on the pumps. They were a friendly group of people. Some even came over from the mud huts, across the river, by boats. The local pump keepers were curious and wanted to help so they could learn as much as they could about the system. That seemed only natural since they would be here long after we depart Iraq.

"The water that leaves the river goes through canals before it actually reaches the lift stations that bring it onto the base," said Bosse. Once the water reaches the base it is stored in two large lakes and made potable for usage.

"These are the canals that the farmers actually get water from and use to grow their crops," said Bosse.

The pumping stations were already in place before the U. S. military arrived at Ali Base, being used for this specific reason.

When maintenance was complete, the pumps had to be primed. A local man jumped into the canal and started throwing buckets of water down the pipes to prime the pumps. It was only moments until both pumps were gushing water and quickly filling the canals.

A few of the convoy personnel were talking to the children. One was even playing marbles with one of the boys as best he could while wearing his heavy body armor.

After the fuel tanks that ran the pumps had been filled, the call "Rally Up" was made and it was time to head back to base. •



Chief Master Sgt. Mike Bosse, 175th Civil Engineer Squadron member, supervises a local Iraqi during maintenance of a water pump providing water to Ali Base, Iraq.

THE LECTERN

This Segment By Chaplain (Col.) William S. Lee, JFHQ State Chaplain

The first task of successful leadership is adequately caring for those we lead. 'Partners in Care' is a resource tool available to every commander and senior non-commissioned officer in the Maryland National Guard (MDNG) to assist in providing support in time of need or crisis for those we lead. 'Partners in Care' is a network of faith communities across Maryland that has agreed to provide support and compassion free of charge to any referred MDNG member or their family. Commanders down to the company and flight level have or will soon receive a *Unit and Commander Partners in Care Resource Manual* to assist in utilizing this program for the benefit of Soldiers, Airmen and their families.

We recruit warriors through attraction, but retain them through satisfaction.

Leadership that understands and responds to warriors concerns, especially in times of crisis and when dealing with the stress of the deployment cycle, promotes a positive retention climate. 'Partners in Care' is great tool that enables leaders to offer support in the community from faith communities where the Citizen-soldier lives. As Soldiers and Airmen of the MDNG experience being connected to an organization that is both professional and compassionate, they are more likely to remain part of the 'Guard Family'; 'Partners in Care' can help us be that kind of an organizational family.

Contact Chaplain (Col.) William S. Lee, 410-576-6124 for more information about 'Partners in Care'. Since the last issue the following congregations have signed-up as 'Partners in Care':

Mt. Paran

Presbyterian Church

10308 Liberty Road
Randallstown, Md. 21133

Rev. Edward Terry 410-655-6220

Ebenezer United Methodist Church

6601 Ebenezer Road
Middle River, Md. 21220

Rev. Wayne Upton 410-335-2172

Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church

1901 Middleborough Road
Baltimore, Md. 21221

Rev. Charles Marshall 410-686-7587

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church

9550 Liberty Road
Frederick, Md. 21701

Rev. Richard Baker 301-898-5292

Deployed Marylanders Receive Visitors From Home

Recently members of the Maryland Air National Guard (MDANG) stationed at the Al Ueid Air Base, Qatar received visitors from home. Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, the adjutant general and State Command Chief Master Sgt. John D. Conaway made the trip to visit more than 40 members of the 135th Airlift Group, 175th Wing Logistics Readiness Squadron and 175th Wing Maintenance Group who are serving with the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing in support of the Air Expeditionary Force (AEF). Among the Marylanders are pilots, loadmasters, mechanics and life support personnel. Members deploy to the base for 60 to 120 days. The MDANG is currently contributing two C-130Js to the mission of logistical air support to the AEF area of responsibility. •



Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, the adjutant general and State Command Chief Master Sgt. John D. Conaway with members of the 135th Airlift Group, 175th Wing Logistics Readiness Squadron and 175th Wing Maintenance Group in Iraq.

Aviation Unit Home In Time For New Year

By Rick Roth, MDNG Public Affairs



Friends and family anxiously await their returning Soldiers. Photo by Maj. Charles Kohler

A Maryland Army National Guard unit located on Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) received a special gift just in time for the holidays.

Thirty-nine Soldiers making-up Detachment 1, 1159th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) returned home Dec. 23 after a year of active duty service in Iraq.

"It's great to be back in the States," said 1st Lt. Angela Hubbard, who served as a forward support team leader while the unit was deployed.

Departing Maryland on Dec. 8, 2004 the unit proceeded to Fort Dix, N.J. where it mobilized for active duty and then proceeded to Iraq.

With the specific mission of aero medical evacuation service, pioneered during the Korean War, the 1159th, composed of pilots, crews, flight medics, and mechanics provided timely evacuation of critically injured Soldiers from the battlefield. Besides personnel the unit deployed with six Maryland Army National Guard UH-60 "Blackhawk" helicopters which it relied heavily on. Operating in Northern Iraq the unit logged more than 4,000 flight hours while performing its mission. This pace makes aircraft readiness critical, said Hubbard.

"You always have to be there for that 24/7 support," said Hubbard. 1st Lt. Hubbard joined the 1159th in 2004 and spent most of the year preparing the unit for its deployment.

"I couldn't have asked for a better group of Soldiers," Hubbard said. "If the families could have seen their Soldiers in action they'd be just as proud."

Several unit members from Maryland received medals while deployed. Chief Warrant Officer Milton Walker and Sgt. Jerome Shai were awarded the Air Medal with Valor for their heroic actions. Sgt. Robert McColligan was awarded the Bronze Star for his service.

Returning to the U.S. on Dec. 23 the aviation unit members were immediately placed on leave for the Christmas holiday. After Christmas, unit members proceeded to Fort Dix to complete their out-processing from the active duty Army. On New Year's Eve the Soldiers finally returned to their home armory located in the Edgewood area of APG. A host of friends and family eagerly received the returning Soldiers.

"We weren't sure we'd be home in time for Christmas until we got on the plane," said Sgt. 1st Class Paul McClain regarding the good timing of their return trip from the Middle East. McClain, an Edgewood resident and 19-year veteran of the unit, serves as a senior flight crew chief.

"I love aviation," said McClain. "After all the years of training we were now doing it for real," he said looking back on the medevac mission.

McClain said that their medics would track the Soldiers they transported even after they were out of their care and continuously update pilots and flight crews on the patients' medical status. This, he said, filled them with a sense of accomplishment because they could see how their efforts paid off.

Asked how he personally felt about performing such a critical mission McClain replied, "Being able to help save lives, and the feeling it gives you... That's not something you can put into words." •



Members of the 1159th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) take time for a group photo during their deployment to Iraq.

Army Guard Unit Honored

Photos by Staff Sgt. William Fearrington



Lt. Governor Michael Steele addresses the 1297th.



Members of the 1297th Support Battalion are honored during the ceremony.

Recently more than 50 members of the Maryland National Guard's 1297th Support Battalion (Corps) headquartered at the State Military Reservation, Havre de Grace, Md. were formally welcomed home after a one year tour in Iraq.

The Freedom Salute Ceremony, which took place on Feb. 5 in Havre de Grace, is designed to publicly acknowledge Army Guard Soldiers and those who supported them during the President's call to duty for recent military operations.

Maryland Lt. Governor Michael S. Steele attended the ceremony and congratulated the Soldiers and families for their hard work and sacrifice.

"There's a lot that goes on between the Soldiers, their families and the American people," said Lt. Governor Steele. "We are so very grateful for what you do."

Members of the 1297th Support Bn. departed Maryland in September 2004 enroute to Iraq. While in Iraq the unit was responsible for coordinating operations such as transportation, refueling and laundry and bath services in support of other units.

During the deployment the unit logged more than two million miles conducting convoy operations said Lt. Col. Lorenza Cooper, commander of the 1297th.

The unit returned to Maryland in early October 2005.

Several Bronze Star Medals as well as other awards were presented to various unit members during the ceremony. •



1297th Support Battalion Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans form-up for their Freedom Salute Ceremony on Feb. 5.

IN BRIEF

Military Department Morale Committee

The mission of the Maryland Military Department Morale Committee is to advise the Adjutant General of Maryland on departmental employee issues and recommend courses of action that will improve morale and the quality of life for department employees.

The Committee has held a canned food drive to benefit family services, ordered picnic tables and grills for the for the 5th Regiment Armory, sponsored an Atlantic City bus trip and held numerous successful auctions, bake sales and raffles.

Members of the committee are currently refurbishing the second floor lunchroom. Furniture has been ordered for the lunchroom and the grills are scheduled for installation in the spring. An Atlantic City bus trip is planned for May 2006. In addition, the Morale Committee plans on renting parking lots of the Fifth to vendors during Artscape.

Current officers are Matt Howse, president; Linda Strack, vice-president; William Fearington, secretary; Jack Heimberger, treasurer; and Dave Glenn, committee member at-large.

Morale Committee meetings are held monthly and all are welcome to participate. Please contact Matt Howse at howsem@mdmildep.org 410-234-3825 or Linda Strack at linda.strack@us.army.mil 410-576-6088 to learn more.

Cell Phones for Soldiers

Have you upgraded your cell phone to one with more bells and whistles? Wondering what to do with the old functional but not so fancy cell phone? What about donating the cell phone to the "Cell Phones for Soldiers" program and help our service members call home. Chief Master Sgt. Raymond Ayres, Head

quarters, Maryland Air National Guard in association with the Harford County Detachment of the Marine Corps League is collecting cell phones with attached batteries for "Cell Phones for Soldiers." The program is dedicated to helping our troops stationed overseas make affordable calls to loved ones. Every donated phone goes towards the purchase of calling cards for deployed servicemembers.

A collection point for donations has been established outside of Room B-12, 5th Regiment Armory. Look for the collection box with the "Cell Phone for Soldiers" poster.

Questions regarding the program may be directed to Chief Master Sgt. Ayres at DSN 496-3804 or commercial 410-234-3804.

For more information about this program go to cellphonesforsoldiers.com Chief Master Sgt. Ayres would like to thank you in advance for your donation.



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Free Anheuser- Busch Theme Park Admission

Budweiser will be honoring the men and women of the armed forces and their families during 2006 by offering single-day complimentary admission to many of their theme parks.

Any Active Duty, Active Reserve, Ready Reserve service member or National Guardsman is entitled to free admission under the "Here's to the Heroes" program. He or she need only register at www.herosalute.com or in the entrance plaza of a participating park and show a Department of Defense

photo ID. As many as three direct dependents of military personnel also are entitled to free admission. Dependents may take advantage of the offer without their service member present, though an adult must accompany minor dependents. Valid for one complimentary single-day admission per person, per year, to one of the following Anheuser-Busch Adventure Parks: SeaWorld Orlando, San Diego, or San Antonio; Busch Gardens Tampa Bay or Williamsburg; Sesame Place; Water Country U.S.A.; or Adventure Island.

Offer valid between Jan. 1, 2006 and Dec. 31, 2006. Days and hours of operation vary by park. Please check with specific park for current operating schedule.

Staff Sgt. McMullen Memorial Scholarship

Wor-Wic Community College, located in Salisbury, Md., is in the process of establishing an endowed memorial scholarship fund in honor of Staff Sgt. Michael J. McMullen. "The Staff Sgt. Michael J. McMullen EMS (Emergency Medical Service) Memorial Scholarship" will be awarded to a student in the paramedic program at the college. Once established the fund will be allowed to accrue interest for one year. The interest will then be awarded as the scholarship. The initial \$10,000 needed to start the fund has been raised however the larger the fund the larger the scholarship. The college hopes to cover the cost of paramedic training for one student per year through the fund.

If you are interested in making a contribution to the fund, please send it to:

Wor-Wic Community College Foundation, 32000 Campus Dr., Salisbury, Md. 21804

For more information contact Daniel Webster at 410-572-8738 or webster@worwic.edu

Guard Recruiting Assistance Program

To maintain today's readiness and strength requirements while preparing for tomorrow's challenges, the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) promotes strength from within by recognizing and rewarding those who help the Army National Guard (ARNG) achieve its goals.

Guard Recruiting Assistants (RAs) can earn additional income assisting ARNG recruiting efforts by identifying well-qualified men and women for service in the ARNG. Recruiting Assistants earn \$2,000 for each new recruit who enlists and reports to Basic Training.

Guard RAs are embedded in their respective communities and are uniquely positioned to identify potential Soldiers in the people they already know. It's an effective way to promote strength from within.

Qualify to become a Guard RA through a simple online process. Take the first step toward earning additional income while assisting the ARNG in meeting future manpower requirements.

The G-RAP is a contracted program designed for individuals who voluntarily apply online at www.GuardRecruitingAssistant.com to become eligible to serve as a part-time RA. The RA applicant will be verified and hired by a contractor, not the ARNG.

Upon enlistment of a new Soldier, the RA will receive an initial payment of \$1,000, with a second \$1,000 payment upon successful shipment to Basic Training. Note: exact payment timelines vary depending upon prior service/non-prior status and availability of training seats.

G-RAP, which began in Maryland on Feb. 15, is available to M-Day Soldiers not performing duty in a Federal status. Active Guard and Reserve, Military Technicians and Active Duty for Special Work Guard members are not eligible for this program.

Address questions to Lt. Col. Kevin Preston at 443-375-7063

Air Guard 2006 First Sergeant and Outstanding Airman of the Year Awards



The Maryland Military Department congratulates Senior Airman Olen D. Smith of the 175th Security Forces Squadron who was selected as Maryland Air National Guard (MDNG) Airman of the Year in the Airman category for 2006; Tech. Sgt. Mark V. Prorock of the 175th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron who was selected as MDNG Airman of the Year in the Non-commissioned Officer category for 2006; Master Sgt. Thomas G. Godwin III, of the 175th Operations Group who was selected as MDNG Airman of the Year in the Senior Non-commissioned Officers category for 2006; and Master Sgt. John W. Wissman III, of the 175th Medical Group who was selected as First Sergeant of the Year for 2006. Also for the first time, a new category was included. Maryland Air Guard members of the Maryland National Guard Honor Guard could compete for recognition as Outstanding Honor Guard Member for 2006. The winner of the competition was Staff Sgt. Joseph W. Langrehr.

The winners of these extensive competitions were honored at a ceremony at the Warfield Air National Guard Base Dining Hall on Jan. 29. In addition to the designations, the winners each received a congratulatory letter from Brig. Gen. Charles A. Morgan III, assistant adjutant general for air, a ribbon, plaque, commemorative coins, a gift certificate for customized ribbon racks for their uniforms, and a \$50 savings bond and membership in the Enlisted Association of the National Guard. Congratulations to the recipients.

Congratulations to the Following for Your New Jobs Within the Military Department!

Senior Airman Lisa Garratt
Sgt. Dale Clester
Mr. Ralph Williams
Staff Sgt. Darren Eggerman
Senior Airman Jamel Forte
1st Lt. Steven Harrigan
Master Sgt. James Autry, Jr.
Sgt. Richard Hamilton
Staff Sgt. Arthur Johnson
Senior Airman Dallas Perry
Sgt. Patricia Jones
Spc. Terrence Tyler
Sgt. Josue Forgue
Master Sgt. Robert Schmidt
Sgt. Patricia Jones
Chief Warrant Officer Joanna Guzewicz
Sgt. Anthony Wester
Sgt. David Grafton
Spc. Taiwo Brown
Staff Sgt. Steven Friesl
Tech. Sgt. Kelly Prior
Master Sgt. Jeanette Wittman
Sgt. Michael Herpel
Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Clay
Airman 1st Class John Butz, III
Senior Airman Nicholas Buchholz
Senior Airman Jacque Roberts
Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Klein
Warrant Officer Jennie Elliott
Capt. Barbara Shingleton
Col. Sean Casey
Spc. Cheyenne Danz
Staff Sgt. Vernon Williams
2nd Lt. Earnest Briley, Jr.
Sgt. Robert Honsa
Staff Sgt. Tajudeen Liadi
Sgt. Janice McNeil
Capt. John Dement
Sgt. Robert McColligan
1st Lt. Mark Taylor
Pfc. Nigel Pierre
Spc. Anthony Depalmo
Joanne Hohman
Cynthia Spindler
Debbie Staigerwald
Beth Stone

Advice for Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the National Guard Bureau have teamed up to improve the coordination of veterans benefits at the state level by training newly created State Benefits Advisors (SBAs) to help ensure a smooth and seamless transition for Guard members returning from active-duty deployments.

Fifty-four new National Guard SBAs have been hired in each of the states and territories and have graduated from a special training program at the Veterans Benefits Academy in Baltimore. The training will enable them to assist returning combat veterans and create coalitions between state veterans affairs offices, veterans service organizations, VA and community groups.

In addition to advising their state's adjutant general and governor, the benefits advisors will serve as the statewide points of contact providing advice to Guard members, their families, the family program office, employer support groups and military personnel.

They will participate in the Reserve and National Guard mobilization and demobilization process and provide materials on VA benefits, compensation, education, vocational rehabilitation, life insurance, home loans, and burial benefits.

For more information contact Maryland State Benefit Advisor Mrs. Kerry Gehring at (410)576-2994 in Baltimore; (410)974-7303 in Annapolis; or by email at kerry.gehring@md.ngb.army.mil •

Numbers You Need to Know

Maryland National Guard Family Readiness Office
410-576-6019

MDARNG Department of Information Management Help Desk
410-702-9600

Maryland National Guard Chaplain's Office
410-576-6124

Red Cross
Central Maryland Chapter, Baltimore
1-888-737-4306
Southern Maryland Chapter, La Plata
301-934-2066
Lower Shore Chapter, Salisbury
410-749-5331
Frederick County Chapter, Walkersville
301-662-5131

Websites

Maryland Government Website
www.maryland.gov

Maryland Military Department Website
www.mdmildep.org

Federal Do-Not-Call List Registration
www.donotcall.gov



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Maryland Military Department

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Michael S. Steele
Lt. Governor

Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill
Adjutant General

Rick Roth
Editor